

July 7, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell,


I am writing to ask that the FCC not impose new hidden charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

Minorities, low-income families, senior citizens, immigrants, college students and military families rely upon calling card services for a variety of needs. Many of these consumers do not have a credit history, bank accounts, or the means to pay a large deposit for local telephone service. For these consumers, a prepaid card may be the only option they have to stay connected – to make phone calls to look for a job, for affordable housing, make a doctor's appointment, or stay in touch with family and friends. These cards offer convenience and predictable cost, as there are no hidden fees or charges. In economically disadvantaged areas, consumers literally risk being disconnected if the prices of these cards increase. Prepaid calling cards are indispensable to consumer groups because they are an affordable alternative to regular and wireless telephone services.

But such price hikes are precisely what the FCC will do if it inflicts new "in-state" access charges and other fees on pre-paid cards. The fees would funnel directly to large local telephone companies while the burden would fall squarely upon those consumers that can least afford to bear it.

Adding access charges to be paid to local telephone companies will substantially increase the per minute charges on pre-paid calls, jeopardizing the benefits Latino and other communities gain from these services. Please stop any effort to raise rates on American consumers and decide that these services are not subject to the exorbitant new access charges and other fees.

Sincerely,


ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator *Kay Hutchinson*
Senator *John Cornyn*
Congressperson

TX

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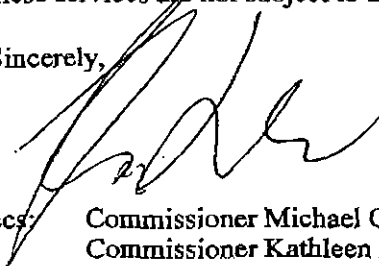
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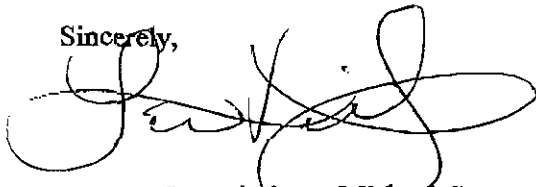
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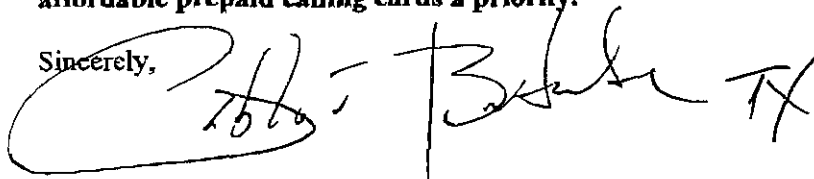
The FCC should **not** impose new access charges and fees upon prepaid calling cards. If you move to increase the cost of these cards, you will simply drive up the cost for minority or disadvantaged individuals to stay in touch in their communities.

The Latino community is particularly sensitive to any price increase for pre-paid calling cards; approximately 43% of Latino households use them. Indeed, half of the households with incomes below \$20,000 have used prepaid cards. Pre-paid calling cards are so prevalent in part because they save consumers money.

With gas and milk prices already holding fixed and low income consumers hostage, we should not be faced with rising telephone service costs as well. In particular, many low-income households who are on fixed incomes depend entirely upon prepaid service because they cannot meet the credit rating or hefty deposit requirements that local phone companies insist upon before getting a phone. With prepaid cards, consumers can make calls from payphones or the telephones of family members and neighbors. We can use these cards to stay "connected" as we look for jobs, hunt for houses, or schedule many of the other daily appointments that we all have.

I simply find it unimaginable that the FCC would impose new charges and fees on these cards. Some of the nation's largest telephone companies would be the largest beneficiaries of such charges. **The FCC should stand up for consumer interests over corporate gain by keeping affordable prepaid calling cards a priority.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Copps", followed by the letters "TX".

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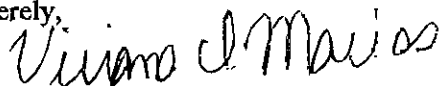
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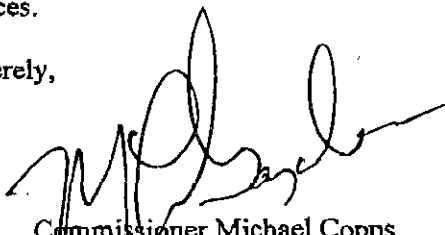
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I understand that the FCC is considering applying "in-state" access charges and other fees on certain prepaid calling card services. Many Latinos, particularly those on fixed incomes or those establishing a credit history, bank accounts and other means necessary to subscribe to local telephone service, rely upon these prepaid calling cards to stay connected at set affordable rates. Students, immigrants, senior citizens, and others face similar challenges.

As a result, prepaid calling cards are the **only** option available – without them, many consumers could, quite literally, be left without access to telephone service. Raising the price of prepaid calling cards will directly harm individuals who can least afford price increases.

Imposing in-state charges would amount to a substantial increase in the cost of prepaid calls, destroying the utility of calling cards to disadvantaged consumers. Allowing the large, local telephone companies to collect such charges, even when they do not sell the calling card to a customer, would drive up prices, thus making these services substantially less affordable. Please look out for consumers and refuse to impose new access charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

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HA x 15

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Delia Mendez
TX

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
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Mary Luna-Holler Texas

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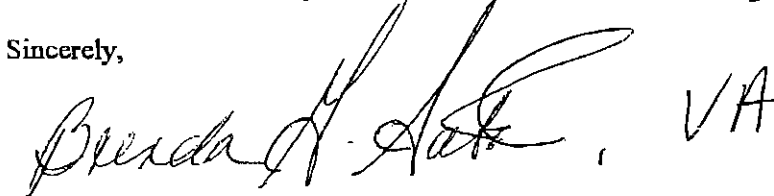
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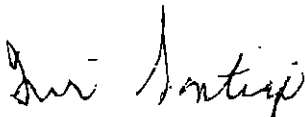
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Luis Zuniga SAT 78230

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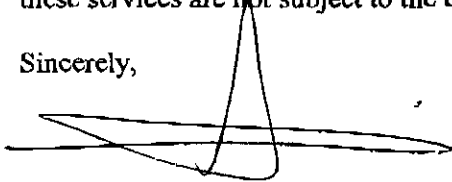
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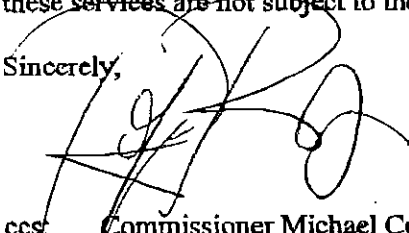
I am writing to ask that the FCC not impose new hidden charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

Minorities, low-income families, senior citizens, immigrants, college students and military families rely upon calling card services for a variety of needs. Many of these consumers do not have a credit history, bank accounts, or the means to pay a large deposit for local telephone service. For these consumers, a prepaid card may be the only option they have to stay connected – to make phone calls to look for a job, for affordable housing, make a doctor's appointment, or stay in touch with family and friends. These cards offer convenience and predictable cost, as there are no hidden fees or charges. In economically disadvantaged areas, consumers literally risk being disconnected if the prices of these cards increase. Prepaid calling cards are indispensable to consumer groups because they are an affordable alternative to regular and wireless telephone services.

But such price hikes are precisely what the FCC will do if it inflicts new "in-state" access charges and other fees on pre-paid cards. The fees would funnel directly to large local telephone companies while the burden would fall squarely upon those consumers that can least afford to bear it.

Adding access charges to be paid to local telephone companies will substantially increase the per minute charges on pre-paid calls, jeopardizing the benefits Latino and other communities gain from these services. Please stop any effort to raise rates on American consumers and decide that these services are not subject to the exorbitant new access charges and other fees.

Sincerely,



cc: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator *Key Hutchinson*
Senator *John Cornyn*
Congressperson

MIRIAM MONSERRATE
COUNCIL MEMBER, 11TH DISTRICT

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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PLANNING, BUDGETING & CONSTRUCTION

July 7, 2004

Chairman Michael K. Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

The borough of Queens boasts one of America's most diverse urban populations, with 46% of its residents born abroad and nearly 54% speaking a language other than English in the home. The importance of affordable phone service for the people in my community cannot be overstated, as people want to keep in touch with relatives across the country and around the world.

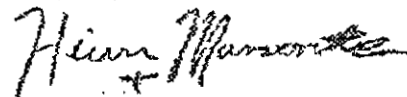
To ensure access to phone service in Queens, many residents have chosen to use pre-paid calling cards. National data show that this method of calling has grown in popularity, particularly among strong ethnic communities and lower-income households. In fact, over 40% of Latinos are card users, and roughly three-quarters of pre-paid card purchasers earning less than \$20,000 a year report purchasing them on a regular basis.

Given the reliance among my constituents on pre-paid calling cards, I am watching with great interest the pending petition regarding the applicability of intrastate access fees to calls made via pre-paid cards. If the Commission decides to move away from the current model, and determines that access charges and other fees may be applied to many pre-paid phone calls, the price of these cards will surely rise.

In Queens and other diverse locales in America, consumers can ill afford to see their \$10 phone card buy fewer minutes, the sure result of what is will become a disproportionate tax on minorities and low-income consumers if the cost of pre-paid

calling cards goes up. I urge the Commission to rule in favor of keeping pre-paid calls affordable.

Regards,



Councilman Hiram Monserrate
New York City Council

CC: Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelsstein
Senator Schumer
Senator Clinton
Assemblymember Peralata



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

ADRIANO ESPINOSA
Assemblymember at Large
New York County

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CHAIR
Black & Puerto Rican Hispanic
Legislative Caucus

CHAIR
Commission on Science and Technology
Task Force on New Americans

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Environmental Conservation
Housing
Health Services
Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force

July 9, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20534

Dear Chairman Powell:

Working families and economically disadvantaged households in Washington Heights and throughout New York depend upon low-priced telephone services. I understand that the FCC is deciding whether to add new access fees on certain prepaid calling card services. I urge you not to increase the cost of these services, as doing so would surely raise the price of staying in touch for hard-working consumers.

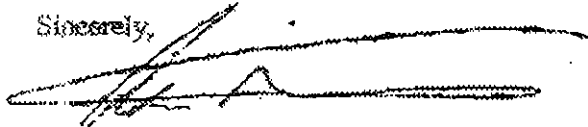
In the last several years, the Puerto Rican and Latino communities in New York have been the beneficiary of lower prices and new services from prepaid calling cards. These cards allow disadvantaged individuals to stay "connected" in their communities, whether it be to call their families, look for jobs, or schedule doctors appointments. Over one-half of households earning less than \$20,000 per year use calling cards on a monthly basis, as do 70% of African-American and 43% of Latino households.

Prepaid cards are particularly important to new Americans and the immigrant community. Without any credit history, such individuals may have no choice for telephone services outside of these prepaid calling cards. Quite simply, imposing access charges and fees on prepaid calls would take money from the people who use them and transfer it to large, Fortune 50 local telephone companies, who would be the largest recipients of additional charges and fees.

I have been working hard to bring economic development for women and minority-owned businesses in Washington Heights and all of New York, and telecommunications tools like prepaid calling card services play an important role in the success of these efforts. Minority-owned small businesses can use pre-paid calling cards to control their telephone costs during the crucial start-up phase of their businesses.

I strongly urge you to refrain from imposing additional access charges and fees on prepaid calling cards.

Sincerely,



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Assembly
Chair, Black and Puerto Rican and Hispanic Legislative Caucus
Chair, New York State Task Force on New Americans
72nd District

cc: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Hillary Clinton



OFFICE OF THE BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT

FERNANDO FERRER
BOROUGH PRESIDENTTHE BRONX COUNTY BUILDING
651 GRAND CONCOURSE
BRONX, NEW YORK 10431

TEL. 299-2500

July 9, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
245 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20354

Re: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to express my opposition to the inflated "access charges" that may be added to only prepaid calling cards.

The residents of the Bronx have been the beneficiaries of lower prices and new services from prepaid calling cards. Over forty percent of my constituents, many of whom are Hispanic, have used them to make keeping in touch more affordable. At a time in which gas costs over \$2 per gallon and the cost of other consumer products are rising, the Latino community should not be burdened by yet another rate increase on a product they so heavily depend on.

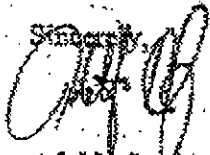
Many Hispanic consumers cannot afford telephone service, particularly when required by the local phone company to make hefty deposits before a telephone line to their home is connected. Pre-paid calling cards give these otherwise "disconnected" Latinos the ability to look for jobs, find affordable housing, make an appointment for a doctor, and stay in touch with family across the country by using public payphones or by using telephone of friends and neighbors. Also, many of the thriving small businesses that are especially dominant in my County of the Bronx rely on these cards to keep their telecom costs fixed and low, which can be important to the success of a new, minority-owned enterprise.

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF THE WFOA

Page 2
Chairman Powell
July 9, 2004

I urge the Commission not to add new access charges and other fees to pre-paid calling card services. Doing so will overly burden our nation's most price-sensitive telephone consumers.

Sincerely,



Adolfo Carrion, Jr.

cc: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adalstein
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Hillary Clinton

July 7, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

Latino and other minority communities rely upon low-cost telecommunications services to accomplish many every day tasks, from looking for a job or affordable housing to staying in touch with family and friends. But pending before the FCC is a proposal that would introduce new charges and fees upon services upon which we depend, immediately harming millions of Latinos and other consumers nationwide.

I understand that the FCC is considering applying "in-state" access charges and other fees on certain prepaid calling card services. Many Latinos, particularly those on fixed incomes or those establishing a credit history, bank accounts and other means necessary to subscribe to local telephone service, rely upon these prepaid calling cards to stay connected at set affordable rates. Students, immigrants, senior citizens, and others face similar challenges.

As a result, prepaid calling cards are the **only** option available – without them, many consumers could, quite literally, be left without access to telephone service. Raising the price of prepaid calling cards will directly harm individuals who can least afford price increases.

Imposing in-state charges would amount to a substantial increase in the cost of prepaid calls, destroying the utility of calling cards to disadvantaged consumers. Allowing the large, local telephone companies to collect such charges, even when they do not sell the calling card to a customer, would drive up prices; thus making these services substantially less affordable. Please look out for consumers and refuse to impose new access charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

Sincerely,

Molly Buchanan / Phoenix / A2

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator *John McCain*
Senator *Jon Kyl*
Congressperson

July 7, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

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Sincerely,



ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator *Fursten*
Senator *Boxer*
Congressperson